

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

«وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ،

وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٠﴾»

المائدة ٢

«Help one another in righteousness and piety,
and do not help one another in sinning and
transgression. And fear and revere Allāh;
verily, Allāh is severe in punishment.»

[Al-Mā'idah 5:2]

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الرَّسَالَةُ النَّبُوكِيَّةُ لابن قَيِّم الجوزيَّة
THE MAGNIFICENT JOURNEY
AS DEPICTED IN IBN UL-QAYYIM'S
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SECOND EDITION

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مَنْشُورَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ

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of *īmān*. He then goes on to deliberate on the situations of true misery and true happiness.

Toward the end, he stipulates the requirements of the Journey of Migration, presenting along the way some very important insights for sound comprehension of the Qur'ān.

In addition to its valuable methodological coverage, this book is very touching in its address to the soul and heart. This is a characteristic that you rarely find in writings of other authors. May Allāh (ﷻ) reward Ibn ul-Qayyim profusely.

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All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) who facilitated completing this work. May He further reward all the Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways. In particular, may Allāh (ﷻ) reward my *shaykh* and teacher, Muḥammad Nāṣir ud-Dīn al-Albānī whose works have benefited us in ways beyond description, my wife Umm 'Abdullāh whose continued support and encouragement have been vital for completing this and other works, 'Abdullāh al-Jibālī who designed the cover, and Ālā' al-Jibālī who proof-read the manuscript.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and fruitful to the Muslims, forgive our shortcomings, purify our work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from us.

Our Lord, forgive us and all of the believers, and bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

Muhammad al-Jibālī
6 Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1422 H
25 August 2001

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The *shaykh*, *imām*, and '*allāmah* Muḥammad Bin Abī Bakr, better known as Ibnu Qayyim il-Jawziyyah, may Allāh be pleased with him and may He please him, said the following in the message that he sent out from Tabūk ¹ on the eighth of *al-Muḥarram* ², 733 AH ³: —

I glorify and praise Allāh with all the praise that He deserves. I ask Allāh to grant distinguished honor and peace to the Seal of His Prophets and Messengers, Muḥammad (ﷺ).

The Happiness of a Human Being

Allāh (ﷻ) says in His Book:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾ المائدة ٢

«Help one another in *birr* ⁴ and *taqwā*, and do not

1 Tabūk is a village on the northern territory of the Arab Peninsula, close to the border of Palestine.

2 *Al-Muḥarram*: The first month of the Islāmic lunar calendar.

3 AH: Abbreviation for "After *Hijrah*". The Islāmic (*Hijrī*) calendar starts on the year that Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) migrated from Makkah to al-Madīnah. This corresponds to 622 CE (Christian Era). Being lunar, the *Hijrī* year is 11 days shorter than the solar year, which makes a difference of one year every 33 years. Thus, to convert AH years to CE years you need to do the following:

$$CE = 622 + AH - (AH \div 33).$$

From this, we can obtain the reciprocal conversion as follows:

$$AH = (CE - 622) \times (33 \div 32).$$

We deduce that this book was written on 1333 CE.

4 *Birr*: Righteousness, virtue, goodness and related meanings. This will be thoroughly explained later in this chapter.

help one another in *ithm* (sin) and *'udwān* (transgression). And revere and fear Allāh. Verily, Allāh is severe in punishment.»¹

This *āyah* comprises all that is good for the people in this life and the hereafter — in regard to their mutual relationships, as well as their relationship with their Lord (Allāh). This is so because every person only deals with one of these two situations or obligations:

- 1) The obligation between him and Allāh (ﷻ), and
- 2) The obligation between him and the other people.²

Duty Toward Other People

A person's duty toward his fellow human beings — in terms of dealing with them, aiding them, and befriending them — is that his association with them should be directed toward helping one another in pleasing and obeying Allāh. This is the ultimate happiness and success of a human being. One cannot find happiness in any other way. Furthermore, this is "*birr* and *taqwā*", which encompass the whole *Dīn*.

It should be noted that when either of the two terms, "*birr*" and "*taqwā*", is mentioned, the other term is implied, either inclusively or necessarily.³ However, it is more likely that they imply each other inclusively. The reason for this is that *birr* (or righteousness) carries the meaning of *taqwā* (or piety) and vice versa. This should not conflict with the fact that when the two terms appear coupled (as they do here), each of them carries a distinctive meaning.

There are numerous other pairs of terms that carry a similar relationship, such as:

¹ *Al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

² Note that Ibn ul-Qayyim will now discuss this second obligation over the next few pages. He will then go back to discuss the first obligation near the end of this chapter and beyond.

³ "Inclusively" here means that each term is included in the meaning of the other. "Necessarily" here means that each term is a natural and necessary consequence of the other.

"*īmān*" versus "Islām"¹,
 "*īmān*" versus "good deeds"²,
 "*Faqīr*" (a poor man) versus "*miskīn*" (a needy man),
 "*Fusūq*" versus "*iṣyān*"³, and
 "*Munkar*" versus "*fāhishah*"⁴.

Comprehending this important rule helps eliminate many misconceptions that have confused people.⁵

¹ When *īmān* and Islām are coupled, the first would mean the belief of the heart, and the latter would mean the apparent actions, such as prayer and fasting. This is expressed in the well-known *ḥadīth* of Jibrīl (ﷺ).

² When *īmān* and "good deeds" are coupled, the first would mean the belief of the heart, and the latter would mean the apparent actions, such as prayer and fasting. On the other hand, when *īmān* is mentioned alone, it would include Islām and good deeds as part of its meaning. This is expressed in the well-known *ḥadīth* of the seventy-some branches of *īmān*.

³ In *Madārij us-Sālikīn* (1:401-403), Ibn ul-Qayyim explains the difference between these two terms as follows:

Fusūq appears in Allāh's Book alone or coupled with *iṣyān*. When it appears alone, it is of two types: *fusūq* of disbelief that takes one out of the folds of Islām, and *fusūq* that does not take out of Islām ...

When *fusūq* is coupled with *iṣyān*, it means committing things that Allāh has prohibited.

As for *iṣyān*, it is disobeying Allāh's commands ...

Thus, *fisq* is more specific to committing a prohibition, whereas *iṣyān* is more specific to disobeying a command, and each of these two terms may be applied to (the meaning specific to) the other.

⁴ In *Madārij us-Sālikīn* (1:413-414), Ibn ul-Qayyim explains the difference between these two terms:

Faḥshā' (or *fāhishah*) is an action whose ugliness (*fuḥsh*) is apparent to everyone, so that any person with sound intellect would abhor it. This is why it usually refers to *zinā* and sodomy. Thus, Allāh applies it (*fāhishah*) to deeds of extreme ugliness. Similarly, any despicable speech is called *fuḥsh*, because of its manifest ugliness, such as obscene swearing and abuse.

Munkar, on the other hand, is an action that is rebuffed by (clean) intellects and natures. This is similar to smelling a foul odor, viewing an unpleasant sight, tasting a repulsive flavor, or hearing a repulsive sound ... Thus, a *munkar* is a deed that the intellects do not recognize or accept.

⁵ This will be discussed further in the next few pages.

Birr in Relation to Taqwā**DEFINING BIRR AND ITHM**

Birr is the excellence sought in an object, as well as the virtue and goodness present in it. This follows from the root and derivation ¹ of this word in Arabic.

Related to “*birr*” is “*burr*” (wheat), which surpasses other grains in benefit and goodness.

Also, a good person is described as *bārr* (fulfilling his promises) or *barr* (dutiful and kind) ². Allāh describes the angels as being honorable and *bararah* (righteous) ³, and those entering paradise as *abrār* (righteous) ⁴.

Birr then comprises all forms of goodness and perfection expected in a human being.

The opposite of *birr* is *ithm*. *Ithm* is a word comprising all evils and defects for which a person would be blameworthy.

HADITHS ABOUT BIRR AND ITHM

An-Nuwās Bin Sam‘ān (رضي الله عنه) reported ⁵ that he asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) about *birr* and *ithm*, upon which he (ﷺ) told him:

«البرُّ حسنُ الخُلُقِ، والإِثمُ ما حاك في صدرك،
وكرهت أن يطَّلَعَ عليه الناس.»

«*Birr* is good manners, and *ithm* is that which weaves (evil thoughts) in your breast and you hate that other people would know about it.» ⁶

¹ I.e., its conjugation.

² See *aṭ-Ṭūr* 52:28, and *Maryam* 19:14,32.

³ In *‘Abas* 80:16.

⁴ As in *Āl-‘Imrān* 3:193, *al-Insān* 76:5, *al-Infīṭār* 82:13, and *al-Muṭaffifīn* 83:18,22.

⁵ Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) made an error here in that he cited the *ḥadīth* of Wābiṣah (cited next) instead of an-Nuwās’s. Since both *ḥadīths* are relevant to the current discussion, we included both of them, as well as a third *ḥadīth* of similar meaning.

⁶ Recorded by Muslim and others.

Wābiṣah Bin Ma‘bid (رضي الله عنه) reported that he went to the Prophet (ﷺ) with the intention of asking him about every thing related to *birr* and *ithm*. He found a group of Muslims surrounding him and asking him questions. He started passing through them, and they rebuked him saying, “Leave Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) alone, O Wābiṣah.” He responded, “Let me approach him. To me, he is the most beloved person to approach.” Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) then said, «ادْنُ يا وابصة!» <Come close, O Wābiṣah.> He went and sat close to him so that his knees touched the Messenger’s (ﷺ) knees. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) asked him, «يا وابصة، أخبرك ما جئت تسأل عنه؟» <O Wābiṣah, would you like me to tell you about what you came to inquire?> He replied, “Indeed, O Allāh’s Messenger, tell me.” The Messenger (ﷺ) said, «جئت تسأل عن البر والإثم.» <You want to know about *birr* and *ithm*.> He said, “Yes indeed!” So the Messenger (ﷺ) gathered his three fingers (the thumb, index, and middle) together, poked Wābiṣah’s breast with them, and said:

«يا وابصة استفت قلبك واستفت نفسك (ثلاث مرات)، البر
ما أطمأنت إليه النفس، وأطمأنَّ إليه القلب، والإثم ما حاك
في القلب، وتردد في الصدر، وإن أفتاك الناس وأفتوك.»

<O Wābiṣah, check your heart and check yourself (repeating this three times)! *Birr* is that which pacifies the soul and comforts the heart. And *ithm* is that which weaves (evil thoughts) in the heart and echoes in the breast, even if the people keep advising you (differently).> ¹

Abū Tha‘labah al-Khushanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger! Tell me what things are permissible to me and what things are prohibited.” He (ﷺ) replied:

«البرُّ ما سكنت إليه النفس، وأطمأنَّ إليه القلب، والإثم ما لم

¹ Recorded by Aḥmad, ad-Dārimī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 1734).

تَسْكُنُ إِلَيْهِ النَّفْسُ، وَلَمْ يَطْمَئِنَّ إِلَيْهِ الْقَلْبُ، وَإِنْ أَفْتَكَ الْمُفْتُونَ.»

«*Birr* is that which pacifies the soul and comforts the heart. And *ithm* is that which does not pacify the soul nor comfort the heart, even if the advisors advise you (differently).»¹

BIRR IMPLIES TAQWĀ

Under the meaning of *birr* comes *īmān* with all its apparent and concealed manifestations; and *taqwā* is certainly included in this meaning.

Birr is frequently used to describe the heart, and to indicate whether it possesses the true taste and sweetness of *īmān*. *Īmān*, in turn, produces in the heart serenity, soundness, satisfaction, strength and delight. Indeed, *īmān* instills in the heart delight, sweetness and pleasure. A person who does not experience this totally lacks or partially misses *īmān*, and is among those described by Allāh (ﷻ):

«قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ: "آمَنَّا." قُلْ: "لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا، وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا: أَسْلَمْنَا،

وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ..."» الحجرات ١٤

«The Bedouins say, "We believe." Say (O Muḥammad), "You do not believe; but you can only say, 'We have submitted to you as Muslims,' for *īmān* has not yet entered your hearts ...»²

The 'ulamā' have two views regarding these Bedouins. The more correct view is that they were Muslims, not hypocrites. Yet they were not (full) believers because *īmān* had not yet entered and truly touched their hearts.

Allāh (ﷻ) comprises the various qualities of *birr* in the following āyah:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 1735).

2 *Al-Hujurāt* 49:14.

«لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُؤْا وَجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ، وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ، وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ، وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ، وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا، وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ. أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ» البقرة ١٧٧

«Righteousness is not (only) that you turn your faces toward the east or the west (in prayers). But (true) righteousness is (in) one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets; and who gives of his wealth, in spite of the love for it, to relatives, the orphans, the needy, the (stranded) wayfarer, those who beg (for help), and for freeing slaves; and who establishes prayers and gives *zakāh*; and those who fulfill their covenant when they make it; and those who are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. It is those who are truthful, and it is those who are *muttaqūn* (possess *taqwā*).»¹

Allāh informs here that believing in Him, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day are all required acts of *birr*. These are the five articles of faith² without which *īmān* cannot stand.

Allāh (ﷻ) then indicates that *birr* also includes the apparent ordained acts of worship, such as performing *ṣalāh* and giving *zakāh*, and other forms of mandatory donations.

Allāh (ﷻ) then indicates that *birr* also comprises the concealed deeds of the heart, which are its essence, such as patience and the fulfillment of covenants.

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:177.

2 In addition to these, belief in *qadar* (Allāh's decree) is also a vital article of faith, as is expressed in the well-known *ḥadīth* of Jibrīl (ﷺ).